

VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY (JGSCV)

Volume 3, Issue 9

June 2008

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The JGSCV commemorated Yom Hashoah Day by viewing *Hiding and Seeking: Faith and Tolerance After the Holocaust*, a compelling video, from Point of View, PBS that focuses on an Orthodox father alerting his sons to the dangers of creating impenetrable barriers between themselves and those outside their faith. They take an emotional journey to Poland to track down the family who risked their lives to hide their grandfather for more than two years during World War II. We also showed a DVD from Yad Vashem regarding the Shoah Names Recovery Project and copies of Pages of Testimony forms were available for attendees to take with them to complete. Copies of the forms may also be downloaded from the JGSCV website (www.JGSCV.org) under prior meetings, May 4, 2008.

Hiding and Seeking: Faith and Tolerance After the Holocaust is available for borrowing from the Jewish Community Library of Los Angeles (www.JCLLA.org) and the Agoura Hills Library is ordering a copy, which should be available soon for borrowing.

When people initially joined JGSCV, the back of the membership form had places to list their family names and ancestral towns. The intent had been to create JGSCV's own

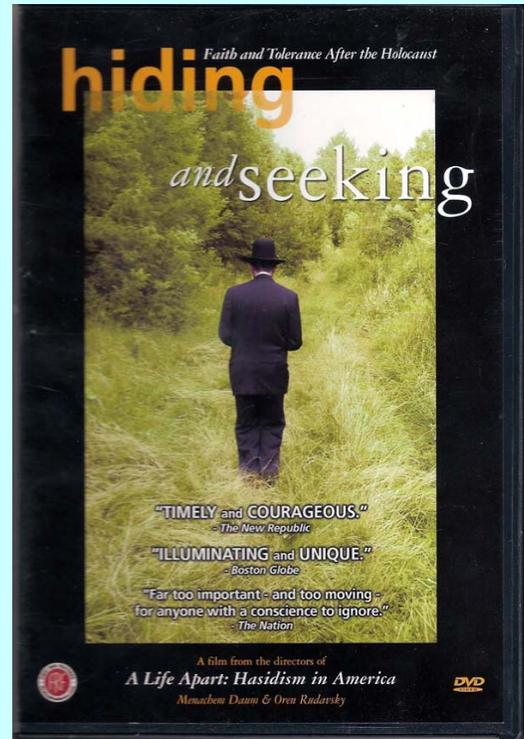
family finder. The JGSCV board of directors has decided not to implement a JGSCV-specific family finder, as the most complete and best place for people to find others searching the same surname and towns, is the one on JewishGen (<http://www.jewishgen.org/jgff/>). There are better ways for our members to mingle and get to share information including:

JGSCV Members: Watch for an e-mail from Membership VP, Helene Rosen, about a Dutch treat get-together luncheon this July to meet and talk about your genealogy!

With Mother's Day just completed and Father's Day coming up, I hope all of you use this opportunity to talk with and interview the elder members of the family. Go over old family photos to find out who is in them, ask questions about their childhood, their parents and siblings and where they were born and lived as a child. Remember to bring a recorder (tape or video with audio) to record the answers! If you are visiting a relative, bring a camera and flash drive with you. You can take photos of them, but also copy family photos they have that you don't and perhaps copy from their computer (to the flash drive) family records that would be of interest. Remember that genealogy is more than names on a page, it is also, about where they lived, their occupation, where they went to school, and how they immigrated. Go through old address books and reconnect by contacting – either by snail mail or e-mail with people in the book. You might be surprised and get a response with lots of family history!

Get involved with your society. Join one of our committees: cemetery, publicity, translations...you will enjoy your genealogy even more. We look forward to seeing you at the June 1st meeting. If you want to participate and share a success, failure, brick wall or artifact, contact me and get added to the list of those who are sharing.

Jan Meisels Allen



FOR SCHEDULE OF FORTHCOMING MEETINGS, SEE PAGE 3

ABOUT JGSCV.....

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County meets once a month, usually on a Sunday. Meetings are oriented to the needs of the novice as well as the more experienced genealogist. Members share materials, research methods and ideas, as well as research success or failures. Members have access to the JGSCV library located on special shelves at the Agoura Hills Public Library. Members also receive our monthly newsletter which is circulated by email.

2008 dues are \$25.00 for a single membership and \$30.00 for a household unit. To join, please send appropriate amount in check made out to JGSCV and addressed to Helene Rosen at 28912 Fountain wood St., Agoura Hills, CA 91301. Obtain new membership or renewal forms on our website at www.jgscv.org by selecting the membership button. Send changes in your contact information to: membership@JGSCV.org

ANNUAL TREK TO SALT LAKE CITY

Veteran Jewish genealogists Gary Mokotoff and Eileen Polakoff will be offering a research trip to the LDS (Mormon) Family History Library in Salt Lake City from October 23-30, 2008. This annual event will offer genealogists the opportunity to spend an entire week of research at the Library under the guidance and assistance of professional genealogists. For more information concerning this fee based program check www.avotaynu.com/slctrip.htm or email inquiries at mokotoff@earthlink.net or call 201-387-7200.

ROUND-UP ON VISIT TO LARFHC

You may have missed a terrific opportunity if you did not attend last month's research session at the Los Angeles Regional Family History Center. Here is what one of our members had to say in her note to President Jan Allen:

"Just wanted to thank you and all the volunteers who helped with the great afternoon at the LA LDS library last weekend. Warren [Blatt] was so helpful, and I got some great leads. Actually, all the resources there were impressive and useful. I hope to carve out some time to go back there. Our Ventura LDS library is quite good, but small. But now that I know more about the possible resources, I'll be able to navigate it with greater ease. By the way, I heard you helping someone on the other side of the room, and this man had evidently found his mother on the Steve Morse site. (I love those Bingo moments!) I haven't yet gone to that website and look forward to doing so. Take care, and thanks for all you do for us!"

Join us next year at another session at LARFHC.

How Jews Got Their Last Names

Here is a fun article in the March/April 2-2008 issue of *Moment Magazine* concerning how Jews selected or were given surnames during the name adoption period as well as name changes that took place in more contemporary times. Check this out on the website <http://www.momentmag.com/Exclusive/2008/2008-03/200803-Names.html>

Los Angeles City Directories

The *Los Angeles Public Library* has digitized a portion of its collection of Los Angeles city directories and Los Angeles street address directories. Available years are 1929-1987. General search instructions are found on all directory pages by clicking on the Help tab. <http://rescarta.lapl.org:8080/ResCarta-Web/jsp/RcWebBrowse.jsp>.

IAJGS Salutes Marian L. Smith:

For many years, Marian L. Smith, Historian at the USCIS History Office and Library, USCIS (formerly INS and now part of the Department of Homeland Security) has served the Jewish genealogy community. She has given lectures about immigration, naturalization, and other related documents at many IAJGS conferences. Most recently, she toured the western part of the United States presenting her talk "Documenting Immigrants to America, 1882-1954" to seven local Jewish genealogical societies [JGSCV included]. She has also written an info file for JewishGen titled "A Guide to Interpreting Passenger List Annotations."

Marian has also written an excellent article, "Women and Naturalization 1802-1940" for the National Archives and Records Administration. Since the mid-nineteenth century a succession of laws worked to keep certain women out of naturalization records and, in many cases, barred their naturalization. Marian's paper helps the genealogist by taking them through the various laws and regulations effecting female naturalization over the years and showing how to research the elusive naturalization records for women.

Marian's articles appear in the National Archives journal Prologue, the FGS Forum, and other publications. Her research focus primarily involves official immigration agency records held by the National Archives.

(This salute to Marian Smith was proposed to IAJGS by our own JGSCV as a result of her excellent presentation to our organization on January 6, 2008.)



Next meeting of the Jewish Genealogical Society
of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County
(* and surrounding areas)

The JGSCV will hold a general meeting, co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim, on Sunday, June 1, 2008 at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks, 2:00 p.m. -4:00 p.m.

The Topic:

**"Genealogy In The Round:
Share Your Successes, Failures, Artifacts
and Brick Walls"**

Come and share a genealogical success, failure, brick wall, or genealogical artifact! This is YOUR meeting—We all learn from one another—take this opportunity to share your genealogical story—success or failure, ask questions about your brick walls, and more!

If you wish to participate in the program, please contact Jan Meisels Allen at president@JGSCV.org. Each participant will be given 5-10 minutes to share—depending on the number of presenters. Whether you are a JGSCV member or a potential member—we'd love to hear your genealogical story.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County is dedicated to sharing genealogical information, techniques and research tools with anyone interested in Jewish genealogy and family history. There is no charge to attend the meeting.

For more information contact information@JGSCV.org, See: www.JGSCV.org or call Jan Meisels Allen @ 818-889-6616

Future JGSCV Meeting Dates

**All Meetings are held at Temple Adat Elohim
2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks**

June 29, 2008: "The International Tracing Service Records at the United State Holocaust Museum Memorial" by Peter Lande (This will be our July meeting)

We will NOT meet in July 2008 as we are meeting twice in June (June 1 and June 29). Neither are we meeting in August, as many of us will be attending the IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy in Chicago. Our future schedule will be announced in the next issue of the Newsletter.

28th IAJGS International
Conference on Jewish Genealogy

CHICAGO

Chicago, Illinois, August 17-22, 2008

Where: Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile Hotel

When: August 17 – 22, 2008

Who: Hundreds of individuals from all over the globe interested in learning more about Jewish Genealogy and sharing what they know.

Why: Because it is fun and educational at the same time, and, Because you will meet lots of people, make new friends, and see old ones.
Because you will network with people searching for ancestors from the same country, town or area.
Because you will hear experts and learn new research tools, and much more.
Because Chicago is a great city with research resources and wonderful sights.
Because you love, are addicted to, just starting, or an expert on the challenges posed by doing genealogy.
Because you believe passing your family history on to future generations is a mitzvah.

How: Go to www.Chicago2008.org for more information.



The International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS) is proud to co-host the 2008 conference with the Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois and the Illiana Jewish Genealogical Society

Future IAJGS Conferences

To get a head start on research possibilities in Chicago go to Mike Karsen's website www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/Chicago. A Google search for "Jewish Chicago" will also lead to many interesting items.

The 2009 IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy will be in Philadelphia, PA in the period August 2-7, 2009 at the Sheraton Philadelphia City Center Hotel. The 2010 Conference will be held in Los Angeles, CA in the period July 11-16 and the 2011 conference will be in Washington DC, no specific dates having yet been announced.

A POTPOURI OF ONLINE OFFERINGS FOR GENEALOGY RESEARCH

A rich source of tips and online records is available to the genealogy researcher at www.researchguides.net. Here it is possible to search out sources of information with respect to the following categories of data: [Birth, Marriage and Death Records](#) | [Cemeteries and Obituaries](#) | [Census Records](#) | [Free Genealogy Stuff](#) | [Historical Newspapers](#) | [Military Records](#) | [Naturalization Records](#) | [Passenger Lists - Immigration Records](#) | [People & Places](#)

For example, vital records of birth, marriage and death will lead to a variety of sites dealing with these events as well as a location where instructions can be gleaned for obtaining records from each of our 50 States. With the historical newspaper selection a directory provides links to online collections of historical newspapers or indexes from about 20 states.

One by one it seems that the various states of the Union are making more and more data available to the genealogy researcher on an online and free basis. Stepping up into this ring is Arizona with birth data for the period 1855-1932 and death records for 1844-1957 at <http://genealogy.az.gov/> Actual images of the relevant birth or death certificates are presented in PDF format. The search will provide hits for the designated individual and/or the surname of the father or mother. A request for the surname COHEN led to 112 hits.

Missouri is another state that offers death citations and associated images of the certificate for the period 1910-1957. Checking its performance, the entry surname COHEN yielded 428 hits. See www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/deathcertificates/

The Church of Latter Day Saints has made available a beta version of a new service, FamilySearch, at <http://search.labs.familysearch.org>. It is possible to enter an individual's name (and whatever other collateral data may be available) and search among the millions of indexed names and browse for available images of associated records. Included as resource categories are vital records, census, court and legal records, land and property recordings, military related data and migration records for selected domestic and foreign jurisdictions. Since this is a start-up operation it is expected that there will be continuous additions made to this collection. In testing the scope of the system, the surname COHEN was entered yielding a sizeable result of 3,900 hits.

Check the flexible search capability to the index of the Holocaust Survivor's testimonies as recorded by Spielberg's Shoah Foundation at [http://tc.usc.edu/vhitec/\(a5qv3ljm0eadavnyww5wnlfw\)/terms.aspx](http://tc.usc.edu/vhitec/(a5qv3ljm0eadavnyww5wnlfw)/terms.aspx). Before you are allowed to use their search engine, you will have to accept their free "Terms of Use" by clicking on the "I Accept" button. This will take you to the list of survivors satisfying a number of query characteristics that you may pose. Out of the 50,656 interviews conducted, there are currently 48,361 Jewish Survivor's testimonies.

We welcome contributions from our members regarding their genealogical research experience. Submit your story to this Newsletter at newslettereditor@jgscv.org .

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